

## Message Text

SECRET

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ORIGIN SS-25

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DRAFTED BY NEA/ARN:LPOPE:PDW  
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O 122258Z AUG 78  
FM SECSTATE WASHDC  
TO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE  
INFO AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE  
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE  
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM IMMEDIATE  
AMEMBASSY PARIS IMMEDIATE  
AMEMBASSY ROME IMMEDIATE  
AMEMBASSY CAIRO  
AMEMBASSY JIDDA  
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT  
AMEMBASSY LONDON  
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM  
AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI  
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

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EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PBOR, LE, US, IS, PINT

SUBJECT: LEBANON: MEETING WITH FRENCH AMBASSADOR

1. IN ABSENCE OF SAUNDERS, WHO HAD BEEN CALLED TO MEETING  
WITH SECRETARY, DRAPER DISCUSSED SITUATION IN LEBANON WITH  
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FRENCH AMBASSADOR DE LABOULAYE. SAUNDERS JOINED MEETING TO  
BRIEF THE AMBASSADOR ON PREPARATIONS FOR THE CAMP DAVID  
SUMMIT (SEPTEL). MEETING TOOK PLACE ON AUGUST 11.

2. AMBASSADOR DE LABOULAYE BEGAN BY GIVING A GENERAL  
SURVEY OF THE LEBANESE SITUATION AS THE MFA ANALYZED IT.  
HE REPEATED VIEW THAT THE PRESENT CEASEFIRE IN

BEIRUT WAS EXTREMELY FRAGILE, AND THAT PRIORITY SHOULD BE GIVEN TO ENABLING THE LEBANESE ARMY UNIT IN KAWKABA TO REACH ITS DESTINATION. HE ASKED WHERE MATTERS STOOD WITH REGARD TO THE IDEA OF AN INCREASED ARAB ROLE WHICH WE HAD DISCUSSED WITH HIM AT THE LAST MEETING.

2. DRAPER RECALLED THAT AT THE TIME HE HAD STRESSED THAT WE HAD NOT YET TAKEN ACTION ON THIS PROPOSAL. HE EXPLAINED THAT ON THE BASIS OF THE LEBANESE REACTION AND AMB. PARKER'S RECOMMENDATIONS WE HAD DECIDED NOT TO PURSUE THE IDEA OF A MEETING OF CONCERNED ARAB STATES, ALTHOUGH OBVIOUSLY THIS REMAINS AN OPTION. AMB. ATHERTON HAD DISCUSSED

THE DESIRABILITY OF THE SAUDIS BECOMING MORE INVOLVED IN THE LEBANESE SITUATION, BUT HE HAD NOT SPECIFICALLY MENTIONED THE CONCEPT OF AN ARAB MEETING ON LEBANON IN LIGHT OF THE LEBANESE VIEW THAT THIS COULD WAIT A WHILE AND THAT, IN ANY CASE, IT WOULD NEED POSITIVE SYRIAN SUPPORT. AMBASSADOR SEELYE IN DAMASCUS, HOWEVER, HAVING ALREADY SCHEDULED AN APPOINTMENT WITH KHADDAM IN ORDER TO EXPLAIN WHAT WE HAD IN MIND, WAS COMPELLED UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES TO EXPLAIN HIS ORIGINAL PURPOSE IN CALLING THE MEETING TO KHADDAM SINCE TO POSTPONE THE MEETING WOULD HAVE MEANT THERE WOULD HAVE BEEN NO POSSIBILITY OF SEEING THE FOREIGN MINISTER AGAIN FOR MANY DAYS. THE MEETING WITH KHADDAM WAS A GOOD ONE ALTHOUGH KHADDAM'S  
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REACTION TO THE ARAB MEETING CONCEPT HAD BEEN NONCOMMITTAL. (DRAPER ALSO EXPLAINED THAT THROUGH A COMMUNICATIONS MISHAP EMBASSY PARIS HAD INADVERTENTLY NOT BEEN INFORMED OF OUR GO-SLOW SIGNAL ON THE ARAB MEETING CONCEPT).

3. IN THE MEANTIME REPORTS OF THE HARD ISRAELI LINE AT THE MEETING BETWEEN ERSKINE, CUQ AND EITAN ON THE DEPLOYMENT OF THE LEBANESE FORCE SOUTH HAD COME AS A SHOCK TO THE LEBANESE. WE HAD SOUGHT CLARIFICATIONS FROM THE ISRAELIS, AND WEIZMAN HAD MADE IT CLEAR TO AMBASSADOR LEWIS IN THE PRESENTATION OF GENERAL EITAN THAT ISRAEL WOULD COOPERATE IN HELICOPTERING THE LEBANESE FORCE TO TIBNIN. NEVERTHELESS, THE DAMAGE HAD BEEN DONE. THE LEBANESE WERE NOW THINKING IN TERMS OF AN EVENTUAL COURT OF INQUIRY FOR HADDAD. BOUTROS HAD SAID THAT A CLOCK WAS TICKING AND INDICATED THAT THE GOL WAS UNDER SOME PRESSURE TO TAKE ACTION AGAINST HADDAD.

4. AMBASSADOR DE LABOULAYE SAID THAT IN RESPONSE TO OUR SUGGESTION, INSTRUCTIONS HAD BEEN SENT TO AMBASSADOR ARGOD TO URGE MODERATION ON THE MARONITE LEADERS IN THE STRONGEST POSSIBLE TERMS. ARGOD HAD BEEN INSTRUCTED TO

TELL AMIN GEMAYEL AND DANY CHAMOUN (AND OTHER CHRISTIAN LEADERS HE THOUGHT APPROPRIATE) THAT THEY MUST BRING THE MILITIA COMMANDERS IN SOUTHERN LEBANON TO THEIR SENSES. OTHERWISE FRANCE WOULD BE FORCED TO WITHDRAW ITS CONTINGENT FROM THE UN FORCE. FRENCH TROOPS HAD BEEN SENT TO LEBANON TO HELP PROVIDE SECURITY FOR ALL LEBANESE, INCLUDING CHRISTIANS, BUT FRANCE COULD NOT CONTINUE TO HELP PEOPLE WHO DID NOT HAVE THE NATIONAL INTEREST OF THEIR COUNTRY AT HEART. FRANCE WOULD COUNSEL MODERATION ON THE SYRIANS, BUT FRANCE BELIEVED THAT ALL LEBANESE SHOULD UNITE BEHIND SARKIS, AND THAT THIS WAS THE ONLY WAY TO SAVE LEBANON FROM IMPENDING TRAGEDY. (LATER, DE LABOULAYE PHONED DRAPER TO REPORT THE RESULT OF THESE TOUGH DEMARCHES. DANY CHAMOUN HAD SAID HE WOULD LIKE

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TO SEE SOME SUCCESS FOR HIS DISENGAGEMENT INITIATIVES IN BEIRUT FIRST BUT WAS PREPARED IN PRINCIPLE TO MAKE AN EFFORT WITH THE MILITIAS ONCE THERE WAS SOME SUCCESS IN BEIRUT; AMIN HAD SAID HE UNDERSTOOD THE SERIOUS CONSEQUENCES OF CONTINUED RESISTANCE BY THE MILITIAS IN THE SOUTH, BUT THEY WERE ENTIRELY IN THE HANDS OF THE ISRAELIS, AND HE COULD DO NOTHING WITH THEM.)

5. THE AMBASSADOR SAID HE WAS PROCEEDING TO PARIS AND THEN ROME THIS WEEKEND. HE THOUGHT HE PERSONALLY MIGHT BE ABLE TO SEE THE MARONITE PATRIARCH IN ROME AND, IF SO, WOULD DO WHAT HE COULD TO GET THE PATRIARCH TO URGE RESTRAINT AND MORE COOPERATIVE BEHAVIOR ON THE PART OF THE MARONITE FORCES IN BEIRUT AS WELL AS IN THE SOUTH.

6. SAUNDERS JOINED THE MEETING, AND EXPRESSED HIS APPRECIATION FOR THIS FRENCH COOPERATION IN LEBANON. THE CONVERSATION THEN TURNED TO THE SUMMIT PREPARATIONS. CHRISTOPHER

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